for prison staff. The scheme is being implemented over a period of five years with an outlay of Rs. 1800 crore on cost sharing basis in the ratio of 75:25 between the Central and State Governments respectively.

(b) There is a process to classify the prisoners on the basis of their nature and type of crime, age group, gender, health status etc. at the time of admission in the prison. First offenders are kept separate from the habitual offenders. The prisoners involved in petty offences are kept away from the prisoners involved in heinous offences.

(c) and (d) Various correctional programmes such as yoga, vipasana, educational programmes, vocational training etc. are held in jails which help in the reformation of prisoners. In some jails NGOs are involved in these programmes. However, details of the NGOs working in these jails is not maintained centrally.

Talks with ULFA

945. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government held talks with ULFA in June, 2006, to bring peace in the North East;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether chances of restoring peace in the North East have brightened as a result of these talks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S.REGUPATHY) : (a) to (c) Third round of talks between the Government and the People's Consultative Group (PCG) constituted by the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) was held on 22.6.2006. During the talks held on 22.6.2006, responding to the points made by PCG, it was stated that their request for the release of five ULFA detenues would be considered favourably in consultation with Government of Assam. Simultaneously, PCG was urged to impress upon ULFA to ensure a peaceful and conducive environment, so that direct talks with Government of India are held at the earliest. PCG expressed satisfaction over Government of India approach to negotiations that will help usher lasting peace in Assam. PCG also assured the Government of India that they would appeal to the ULFA to create a peaceful atmosphere in Assam, which will be conducive to holding direct talks. It has been noted that security situation in Assam by and large remained peaceful since the meeting of June 22, 2006.